

Message Text

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73-61
ACTION EUR-10

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R 141518Z MAR 74
FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7988
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
USMISSION BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USNATO 0863

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUCHAREST 0996

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OGEN RO
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR BARNES: PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS

REF: STATE 050549

1. SUMMARY: TONE OF MY DISCUSSION WITH CEAUSESCU TODAY WAS SET BY HIS HALF-SERIOUS, HALF-JOKING REMARK AFTER HE HAD FINISHED HIS FORMAL SPEECH WHEN HE NOTED THAT NOW I WAS BACK IN ROMANIA HE TRUSTED I WOULD BE BRINGING MFN AS WELL. COMMERCIAL AND ECONOMIC QUESTIONS DOMINATED THE TALK. END SUMMARY

2. CEAUSESCU EXPRESSED SOME IMPATIENCE WITH CONTINUING
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CONGRESSIONAL DELAYS ON MFN AS WELL AS HOPES FOR A MORE

ACTIVE ADMINISTRATION ROLE. HE WAS CLEARLY PLEASED WITH THE NEWS OF SECRETARY DENT'S DEFINITE PLANS BUT IT WAS EQUALLY CLEAR SECRETARY DENT AND THE IPU CODEL DUE IN MID-APRIL WILL BE GIVEN CONSIDERABLE EXPOSURE TO ROMANIAN VIEWS ON MFN, THE ESSENCE OF WHICH IS CONTAINED IN CEAUSESCU'S STATEMENT TODAY THAT LACK OF MFN SERIOUSLY LIMITS ROMANIAN ABILITY TO BUY IN THE US BY LIMITING ROMANIAN EXPORT EARNINGS. AT THE END OF OUR TALK HE CAME BACK TO MFN BY REITERATING THE HOPE THAT THE PROBLEM COULD BE RESOLVED BY MID-SUMMER LEST MFN FOR ROMANIA BE LOST AGAIN, THIS TIME IN THE RUSH FOR CONGRESSIONAL ADJOURNAMENT IN AN ELECTION YEAR. HE SAID HE WOULD LIKE NOTHING BETTER THAN TO BE ABLE TO ANNOUNCE MFN ON THE OCCASION OF ROMANIAN NATIONAL DAY AUGUST 23.

3. ON THE COMMERCIAL SIDE I MENTIONED MY DISCUSSIONS WITH FIRMS IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE US AS WELL AS MY TALKS HERE WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF COMPANIES SUCH AS SIKORSKY WHOSE PROPOSAL SECRETARY DENT HAD NOTED DURING THE BLAIR HOUSE DISCUSSIONS LAST DECEMBER. CEAUSESCU SAID HE HAD BEEN CONSIDERING THE HELICOPTER QUESTION JUST LAST EVENING AND THAT SO FAR THE FRENCH STILL HAD A SIGNIFICANT EDGE WITH THE MORE ATTRACTIVE PROPOSAL. ON THE CUMMINS ENGINE JOINT VENTURE PROJECT, HE WAS MUCH MORE ENCOURAGING (TALKING OF A DECISION QUITE SOON) AS HE WAS ON THE POSSIBILITY OF AMERICAN FIRMS BEING ASKED TO PARTICIPATE IN OFF-SHORE OIL EXPLORATION IN THE BLACK SEA.

4. EARLY IN THE DISCUSSION CEAUSESCU HIMSELF RAISED THE MATTER OF DELAY IN EX-IM CREDITS BUT WAS UNDER THE MISAPPREHENSION THAT THIS WAS A CONGRESSIONAL DECISION. IN ADDITION TO GIVING HIM MORE BACKGROUND, I DREW ON REFTEL TO TELL HIM WE HOPED FOR AN EARLY CLARIFICATION OF THE ISSUE.

5. IN THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL SPHERE HE THOUGHT THE SOVIETS MIGHT JUST SUCCEED BY THE END OF THIS YEAR IN CALLING A EUROPEAN-WIDE GATHERING OF COMMUNIST

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PARTIES BUT SAID HE COULD NOT VISUALIZE WORLD-WIDE MEETING TAKING PLACE FOR THE NEXT TWO OR THREE YEARS. AS FOR ROMANIAN ATTENDANCE AT SUCH CONCLAVES HE SAID ROMANIA WOULD GO PROVIDED THERE WAS NO CONDEMNATION OF OTHER PARTIES BUT THAT HE DID NOT EXPECT THE CHINESE EVEN TO BE INVITED TO A WORLD MEETING. THE ONLY OTHER INTERNATIONAL QUESTION ON WHICH HE DWELT AT SOME LENGTH WAS THAT OF THE MIDDLE EAST BUT EVEN HERE HE

CONFINED HIMSELF ESSENTIALLY TO REITERATING THE NEED FOR ISRAELI FLEXIBILITY, TO COMMENTING FAVORABLY ON THE FLEXIBILITY BEING SHOWN BY PALESTINIAN LEADERS LIKE ARAFAT AND TO NOTING THAT ONLY THE IRAQIS, AND EVEN THEY FOR ONLY THE SHORT TERM, WERE LIKELY TO OPPOSE THE CREATION OF A PALESTINIAN STATE.

6. INTERNALLY, THE ONLY NOTE OF INTEREST WAS HIS SAYING THAT THE FRONT OF SOCIALIST UNITY WOULD MEET IN MAY AND HIS STATING THAT THE FRONT IS BEING GIVEN SOMEWHAT LARGER RESPONSIBILITIES IN AN EFFORT TO INVOLVE NON-PARTY SECTIONS OF THE POPULATION STILL MORE ACTIVELY IN INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT. I WAS UNABLE TO DRAW HIM OUT IN ANY DETAIL ON THE NEW PLAN OR THE PARTY CONGRESS OTHER THAN A STATEMENT THAT MACHINE-BUILDING WOULD CONTINUE TO OCCUPY FIRST PLACE. PARENTHETICALLY, HE COMMENTED THAT IF ROMANIA ONLY HAD THE PRODUCTIVE CAPACITY TO FILL MOST OF THE ORDERS FOR MACHINES THAT WERE BEING PROPOSED IT WOULD BE MAKING "BILLIONS."

7. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH HE WAS NOT PREPARED TO GET INTO THE SUBSTANCE OF MANY QUESTIONS, CEAUSESCU'S PROMPT RECEIVING OF MY CREDENTIALS AFTER HIS RETURN AND HIS KEEPING ME FOR A DISCUSSION OF NEARLY AN HOUR (UNUSUAL IN BUCHAREST, AND DESPITE HIS AIDES LOOKING AT THEIR WATCHES) ARE SIGNS OF THE IMPORTANCE HE CONTINUES TO ATTACH TO AMERICAN-ROMANIAN RELATIONS.

8. SIMILARLY, HIS FORMAL REMARKS WERE CHARACTERIZED BY EXPRESSIONS OF CONSIDERABLE SATISFACTION WITH THE COURSE OF US-ROMANIAN RELATIONS AND PARTICULARLY WITH HIS RECENT DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PRESIDENT IN

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WASHINGTON WHICH LED TO THE SIGNING OF THE JOINT DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

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